

INTRODUCTION

Many long-term health problems, as well as injuries, experienced by adolescents are caused by preventable behaviors. Habits formed during adolescence may lead to diseases not manifested until adulthood. Educators around the country have agreed that effective prevention programs are necessary to help reduce the extent to which young people engage in behaviors that put their health at risk. National responses have included congressional passage of the *Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1986*, the initiation by the nation's governors and the president of the *National Education Goals*, and the adoption by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services of the *Healthy People 2000: National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Objectives*.

The same concerns about the long-term health and well being of its youth prompted Idaho's Department of Education to make drug and alcohol prevention and school safety a priority concern. As one component of its efforts, the Department has collaborated with the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) since 1996 on a study to determine the extent to which Idaho students avoid or use alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. The study includes an investigation of student attitudes toward violence and safety in the schools. A statewide survey of randomly selected students has been administered five times, in 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002, and 2004, providing important data that also allow the tracking of trends.

This report presents the key findings from the 2004 survey of 15,491 students from grades six, eight, ten, and twelve. Where appropriate, it makes comparisons to findings from the 1996, 1998, 2000, and 2002 surveys, as well as to national data from the University of Michigan *Monitoring the Future* study.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report details and summarizes the statewide results of the 2004 *Idaho Substance Use and School Climate Survey*, conducted by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) for the Idaho Department of Education. The 2004 survey represented the fifth administration of a survey first used in 1996 and continued in 1998, 2000, and 2002. This replication permits the documentation of trends in substance use and school climate in Idaho.

The first administration of the survey included only sixth-, eighth-, and 12th-grade students. The second administration added a 10th-grade sample as well. The third administration included sampled students from the sixth, eighth, ninth, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. The most recent administration included sixth-, eighth-, 10th-, and 12th-grade students.

On the survey, students were asked about their use and avoidance of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs; their experience with alcohol and drug education; and their perceptions of the school environment, safety at school, and related safety issues such as driving under the influence of intoxicants.

Students were selected using a stratified random sampling strategy. The initial goal was to select at least 625 students from each of four grade levels, in each of the six regions in the state. For each grade, schools in each of the six regions were randomly sampled. Even if there were 625 in one grade from one selected school, at least two other schools were sampled for each grade within each region. If selected, all students in that grade level at that school were invited to participate in the survey. Participation was voluntary, and students and their parents decided whether to participate based on information provided by district officials prior to the day of the survey. Table 1 presents the final sample sizes.

Table 1
Final Statewide Sample Size by Grade and Region 2004

	Region I	Region II	Region III	Region IV	Region V	Region VI	TOTAL
Grade 6	703	529	699	645	712	651	3,939
Grade 8	855	595	673	650	689	948	4,410
Grade10	621	518	640	683	582	678	3,722
Grade 12	694	491	781	394	426	634	3,420
TOTAL	2,873	2,133	2,793	2,372	2,409	2,911	15,491

Surveys were to be administered between the final two weeks of October and the first week of November 2004; most schools conformed to this schedule. Instructions for survey administration were provided to principals and teachers, and the protection of student confidentiality was emphasized.

After the surveys were returned to NWREL, they were scanned electronically. Data was then screened for obviously problematic answers (grossly inconsistent responses across items, affirmative responses to a question about a fictitious drug, impossibly high reports of drug use, etc.). Based on this screening, 3 percent of the surveys were eliminated from analysis. This percentage is comparable to the percentage of excluded surveys from previous years.

Summary of Findings

Major findings are presented below, organized by type of substance use or school climate issue. More complete discussion of each topic can be found in the body of the report.

It is important to note that data from the sampled students provide only an *estimate* of the actual substance use or opinions of students in Idaho. Because only a sample of all students in the state completed the survey, there is likely some sampling error in the estimates. This occurs in all survey research. Many of the findings within the body of the report are presented with the estimated margin of error. A finding that 20 percent of students, ± 2.2 percent, agreed with a statement means that there is a 95 percent probability that the true proportion of all students in the state who agree with the statement falls between 17.8 and 22.2 percent. When comparing the results from the 2002 and 2004 surveys, if any difference in results falls within the margin of error, it is not possible to reliably conclude that there has been any real change in the population.

Alcohol Use

Lifetime Prevalence

Lifetime prevalence rates indicate the proportion of students who have tried alcohol at least once in their lives. In past surveys, Idaho students have been less likely to report that they have ever tried drinking alcohol compared to their peers nationwide. This pattern continued in the year 2004. At every grade level, these percentages are lower than the corresponding national averages.

The percentage of students reporting they had tried alcohol more than doubled between sixth and eighth grade (from 18.2 to 37.9 percent), suggesting that middle school is a time when many students begin to try alcohol for the first time. The percentage of students who reported drinking continued to increase through the grades and stabilized in 12th grade (58.4%) at slightly less than three-fifths of all students.

When compared to the national *Monitoring the Future Survey*, the percentage of eighth- and 10th-grade students trying alcohol in the national and Idaho study shows a decline since 1996. While the percentage of 12th-grade students trying alcohol in the national study shows little change since 1996, the percentage of Idaho 12th-graders continues to decline from 1996.

Student Drinking in the Previous 30 Days

Students were also asked to report on how often they had consumed any alcohol (beer, wine, wine coolers, or hard liquor) in the 30 days prior to completing the survey. Recent student drinking is more common among the older students, peaking with about 40 percent of surveyed Idaho high school seniors reporting having used alcohol in the previous month. The percentage of Idaho students reporting any recent drinking was very similar to national figures. When the margin of error is taken into account, Idaho seniors were less likely to report recent drinking than seniors nationwide, and Idaho eighth- and 10th-graders report about the same likelihood of recent drinking. Thus, although Idaho seniors overall were less likely to have ever experimented with alcohol than were seniors nationwide, patterns of more frequent alcohol use in Idaho appear to mimic patterns elsewhere in the United States.

Students in every grade, except grade 12, reported less 30-day alcohol use than they did in 1998 and 1996, and their 2004 reported rates were very similar to those reported in 2000 and 2002. Students in grade 12 reported use levels very similar to 2000 and down only slightly from 1996. These changes are well within the margin of error and may not reflect any genuine change in student behavior.

Frequency of Binge Drinking

Binge drinking refers to incidents of consuming five or more drinks at a single sitting. Binge drinking is a hazardous form of substance use, particularly when combined with driving. Binge drinking remained relatively rare before high school and was most common among high school seniors, about a third of whom reported having engaged in binge drinking within the past 30 days.

Idaho students reported notable regional differences in binge drinking. High school seniors in Region I were much more likely to report having engaged in binge drinking in the previous month (about 42.9 percent) than students in other regions.*

Age at First Full Drink

Although there were some small fluctuations, these were within the margin of error, meaning that high school seniors who used alcohol in the year 2004 began drinking at about the same ages as seniors in 1996, 1998, 2000, and 2002. It appears that among the lower grades, a larger percentage of students are consuming their first drinks at earlier ages. Eighth-grade students were more likely to report consuming a full drink before age 12 than were current 12th-grade students.

Sources of Alcohol

The most frequent response for high school students was that they obtained alcohol “from friends” (between 28.5 and 33.8 percent). Compared to 1996, students in the 10th and 12th

* Region I encompasses the following thirteen school districts: St. Maries, Plummer/Worley, West Bonner County, Lake Pend Oreille, Boundary County, Coeur d’Alene, Lakeland, Post Falls, Kootenai, Kellogg, Mullan, Wallace, and Avery.

grades were slightly less likely to report that they had obtained alcohol from other adults or had purchased it themselves.

Perceived Risk of Harm from Alcohol

Across all grade levels, students were most likely to respond that this behavior posed a “great risk.” Eighth-grade students were most likely to see this level of drinking as highly risky. At all grade levels, fewer than 10 percent of students indicated that they thought this level of drinking posed no risk.

Parental Supervision and Student Alcohol Use

Students who experienced lower levels of supervision by their parents were more likely to report moderate or high levels of alcohol use. Among students who reported low supervision, 23.1 percent said they did not drink alcohol, 22.9 percent reported low use of alcohol, 24.3 percent reported moderate use, and 16.4 percent reported high use. In contrast, 44.8 percent of highly supervised students reported no alcohol use. Among the highly supervised students, 38.8 percent reported low alcohol use, 11.1 percent moderate use, and 5.3 percent high use.

Tobacco Use

Lifetime Prevalence

The percentage of students who reported having smoked continued to increase with each subsequent grade, until it stabilized at 12th-grade at about 29.7 percent of all students. Very few sixth-grade students (3.7%) reported having ever tried smoking. By eighth grade, this percentage increased substantially to 12.2 percent.

At all grade levels that were surveyed in more than one year, the percentage of students reporting that they had ever smoked tobacco decreased compared to the first year students were surveyed. Among sixth-graders, however, there was a slight *increase* in smoking prevalence in 2004 compared to 2002. However, this increase was within the margin of error. This suggests that the prevalence of smoking among sixth-grade students probably has changed little since 2002. Sixth-grade prevalence in 2004 was still below that reported in 1996. Among eighth-, 10th-, and 12th-grade students, there appears to have been a real reduction in the percentage of students using smoking tobacco.

Gender Differences

Among younger students (grades six and eight), there was almost no difference between boys and girls in the reported use of smoking tobacco. Among 10th-grade students, boys were slightly more likely than girls to have tried smoking; but among 12th-grade students, girls appeared to be somewhat more likely than boys both to have tried smoking and to smoke on a daily basis.

Smokeless Tobacco

Lifetime use of smokeless tobacco also dropped compared to earlier years. At all grade levels with national data available, Idaho students were less likely to report use of smokeless tobacco than were their counterparts nationwide. Male students were much more likely to try smokeless tobacco than were female students, and virtually all students who reported using smokeless tobacco on a daily basis were male.

Current Levels of Tobacco Use

In 2002, declines in the overall percentage of students who reported using smoking tobacco were due primarily to lower rates of experimental or occasional use (referred to as “some” use). This explanation continues to hold in 2004 for eighth-, 10th-, and 12th-grade students. For 12th-grade students, however, the reduction in smoking overall is most attributable to a notable drop in the percentage of students who smoke on a daily basis—down from 19.1 percent in 1996 to 8.0 percent in 2004.

The percentage of students who reported having smoked in the 30 days prior to the survey increased between middle school and high school and continued to increase during the high school years. This was consistent with national patterns, although the percentage of 12th-grade students in Idaho who smoked was still lower than the percentage nationally.

Age When Started Smoking

Students were asked how old they were when they smoked their first cigarette. Among high school seniors who said they had smoked cigarettes (33.1%), the most common response was age “15 or older” reported by 13.6%. About 12.4 percent of seniors reported that they had first smoked a cigarette at age 12 or younger.

Source of Cigarettes

Students were also asked, “If you smoke, how do you usually get the cigarettes you smoke?” Most students who smoked reported that they obtained cigarettes “from friends.” Only high school seniors, some of whom were 18 years old, commonly reported that they obtained cigarettes from a store. A smaller proportion of students answered that they got cigarettes from adults, and almost no students (less than one percent) generally obtained cigarettes from vending machines.

Students also had the option of responding “I don’t smoke,” and this was the predominant answer chosen at all grade levels (94.9 percent of sixth-grade students, 88.6 percent of eighth-grade students, 80.9 percent of 10th-grade students, and 74.9 percent of 12th-grade students).

Perceived Risk of Harm from Smoking

Students were asked about their perceptions of potential harm from high consumption of smoking tobacco (“How much do you think people risk harming themselves if they smoke one or more packs of cigarettes a day?”). Across all grade levels, students were most likely to respond

that this behavior posed a “great risk.” In any given grade, less than 6 percent of students answered that smoking a pack of cigarettes a day posed “no risk.” Just as girls had seen binge drinking as riskier than boys had, in every grade surveyed, girls were more likely than boys to indicate that people ran “great risk” of harming themselves if they smoked a pack or more of cigarettes each day.

Drug Use

Lifetime Prevalence of Any Drug Use

Lifetime prevalence rates indicate the proportion of students who have tried drugs at least once in their lives. Idaho students continued to report lower lifetime prevalence rates than the national average. For example, whereas 51.1 percent of high school seniors nationwide reported having used drugs at least once in their lifetime, only 35.4 percent of seniors in Idaho reported having used drugs

Lifetime Prevalence of Use of Specific Drugs

Marijuana

As in previous years, *marijuana was the most commonly used drug* for students in eighth grade and above and accounted for most of the drug use reported on the survey. Sixth-, eighth-, 10th-, and 12th-grade students reported less marijuana use in 2004 than in 1996, but there was little change from 2000 for eighth- and 10th-grade students. Eighth-grade students reported a small *increase* in use compared to 2002, but they used less than in 1996 (the 0.9 percent margin of error means that this fluctuation may be due to random sampling error). Marijuana use continued to increase during high school years until, by 12th grade, about three in ten Idaho students (27.1 percent) had tried marijuana.

Cocaine

About 4.3 percent of Idaho high school seniors reported that they had ever tried cocaine. Eighth- and 12th-grade students reported that they were less likely in 2004 than in 1996 to have tried cocaine. When taking margin of error into account, prevalence among sixth- and 10th-grade students remained about the same as in 1996.

Opiates

The category “opiates” includes the drugs heroin, codeine, and opium. Use of these drugs was also uncommon among students in Idaho. When compared with 1996, reported use of opiates remained stable for sixth- and 10th-grade students in 2004 and showed decreases in eighth- and 12th-grade students.

Depressants

The Idaho survey in 2004 included, under the category “depressants,” the drugs known as quaaludes, ludes, downers, and reds. These drugs were also uncommon, reportedly used by about 5.3 percent or fewer Idaho students. Compared to earlier years, reported use changed very little (small increases were within the margin of error), except for sixth-graders. When compared to 1996, the lifetime prevalence of any depressant use has declined among Idaho eighth-graders.

Hallucinogens

The survey included the drugs angel dust, LSD, PCP, ‘shrooms, acid, and DMT in the category of hallucinogens. The use of these drugs dropped among sixth-, eighth-, and 12th-graders, compared to reported use in 1996.

Inhalants

Although inhalant consumption affected only between 5.0 and 10.2 percent of students, it was the most commonly reported drug use among sixth-grade students. Compared to 1996, however, the use of inhalants by eighth-grade students has declined. It has also declined among high school seniors, who, when compared to 1996 reported levels, were less likely than eighth-graders to report inhalant use.

Tranquilizers

Student-reported use of tranquilizers in all grades has remained stable when compared to 2002. National data (Johnston, et. al., 2004) suggest a slight decrease in the use of tranquilizers among high school students when compared to 2002 (11.4 percent in 2002 versus 10.6 percent in 2004).

Methamphetamines

When compared to 1996, the reported use of methamphetamines by students in eighth and 12th grades has declined. When compared to 1998, 10th-graders' reported use of methamphetamines has also declined.

Steroids

The use of steroids among students in Idaho remained similar in 2004 to levels reported in 2002 for grade six. There was a slight decrease in reported use of steroids by eighth-, 10th-, and 12th-grade students when compared to their reported use in 2002. However, there was an increase in lifetime prevalence of steroid use among 12th-graders in 2004 when compared to 1996. Nationwide, 1.9 percent of eighth-graders, 2.4 percent of 10th-graders, and 3.4 percent of 12th-graders reported steroid use in 2004.

Ecstasy

Nationwide, 2.8 percent of eighth-graders, 4.3 percent of 10th-graders, and 7.5 percent of 12th-graders reported ecstasy use in 2002. The prevalence rates in Idaho of ecstasy use remained below the national levels.

Levels of Current Drug Use

The level of “No Use” remains stable for grades six, ten, and twelve when compared to 1996. The level of “No Use” by eighth-grade students reflects a significant increase when compared to reported levels in 1996 and when taking margins of error into account. By the same token, the other categories of drug use—“low use,” “moderate use,” and “high use”—reported by eighth-grade students declined significantly compared to 1996.

Student Drug Use in the Previous 30 Days

About 16.8 percent of 12th-graders and 13.6 percent of 10th-graders reported using marijuana at least once in the previous 30 days. Smaller numbers of younger students—6.2 percent of eighth-graders and 1.2 percent of sixth-graders—also reported recent use of marijuana.

Other recent drug use—specifically of cocaine, methamphetamines, and ecstasy—is summarized. About 2.1 percent of 10th and 12th grade students reported recent use of cocaine. Idaho 10th-graders reported the highest recent use of methamphetamine and ecstasy across the grades (2.5 and 2.0 percent, respectively). Reported recent use of these drugs by 12th-graders was lower (2.2 and 1.6 percent, respectively).

Perceived Availability of Drugs

While the percentages for Idaho students were smaller than for their peers elsewhere in the country, about seven out of 10 Idaho seniors (71.9 percent) maintained that it would be “fairly easy” or “very easy” for them to get marijuana. This is a large increase over the 27.4 percent of eighth-graders who believed it would be easy to obtain marijuana.

About 27.9 percent of Idaho seniors stated that it would be easy for them to get cocaine. Once again, students in Idaho were less likely than students in the national study (47.8%) to believe that it would be “fairly easy” or “very easy” to obtain cocaine.

The same overall pattern—of lower perceived drug availability in Idaho than nationwide—held, but the gap between Idaho students and their peers elsewhere in the country was larger. While 55.4 percent of high school seniors nationally believed they could easily obtain methamphetamines, only 30.3 percent of Idaho seniors held this belief.

Perceived Risk of Harm from Drug Use

Students in the eighth grade were most likely to judge that there was “moderate risk” or “great risk” from marijuana, and the perception of risk declined among the older students. Nevertheless, at all grades more than two-thirds of students felt there was “moderate risk” or “great risk” of harm involved in marijuana use.

Students perceived the use of heroin as riskier than smoking marijuana, and the perception of risk tended to increase as students became older.

In the case of cocaine, Idaho students were *more likely* than students in the national survey to perceive using cocaine once or twice as a “great risk.” In the national survey, the rates of perceived use of cocaine once or twice as a “great risk” was, for eighth-, 10th-, and 12th-grade students, 44.4 percent, 50.7 percent, and 50.7 percent, respectively.

Parental Supervision and Student Drug Use

Among students who reported low supervision, 45.1 percent reported no drug use, 23.1 percent reported low use, 15.0 percent reported moderate use, and 16.8 percent reported high use of drugs. These figures looked very different for highly supervised students, 70.2 percent of whom reported no drug use. Among the highly supervised students, 17.3 percent reported low drug use, 7.4 percent moderate drug use, and 5.1 percent high drug use. Although fewer of the younger students use drugs, the same overall pattern of more drug use by students with less parental supervision holds across the different grades.

Drug and Alcohol Education

Student Attitudes toward Alcohol and Drug Education

Overall, more than *one-half of all students reported that school had been their primary source of information about the dangers of drugs and drinking* (55.6%). About one-quarter of all students (slightly more for sixth-graders) said their families had taught them the most (26.6%). About 8.3 percent of students said the media (TV, movies, and newspapers) had provided most of the information they had, and 6.5 percent said they received most of their information from other children. Only between 2 and 4 percent of students (depending upon grade level) said that church or temple provided most of their information about the dangers of drugs and drinking.

Students indicated that they believed alcohol and drug education should begin in elementary school (61.2%). About 24.7 percent of 12th-grade students felt that it should begin by third grade or earlier, while another 29.0 percent felt that fourth or fifth grade was an appropriate time. Girls (62.9%) were more likely than boys (59.6%) to say that alcohol and drug education should begin early in elementary school.

Knowledge Gained from Alcohol and Drug Education

Overall, between two-thirds and three-quarters of all students reported that they had learned “some” or “a lot” about types of drugs, how to say “no,” how to make good decisions, and healthy alternatives to drug and alcohol use. Younger students reported that they had learned more, with a gradual decline in the percentage of students in the higher grades reporting that they had learned “some” or “a lot”.

Boys were slightly, but consistently, more likely than girls to say they did not remember what they had learned, while girls were more likely to say that they learned “a lot.” Even among the youngest students, who were most likely to say that they had learned “a lot,” this difference between boys and girls persisted.

Violence, Gangs, and Weapon-Carrying

Endorsement of Physical Violence

About one-fourth of high school students endorsed the use of physical violence in response to being disrespected or called names. When the margin of error is taken into account, this percentage appears to have changed little compared to previous years. Students in the sixth grade were much less likely to endorse physical violence (10.1%) than were students at the other grade levels.

Perception of Trouble Caused by Gangs

Students in the sixth through 10th grades were much more likely than 12th-graders to perceive gangs as a problem. In 2004, across all grades, boys were much more likely than girls were to state that gangs caused trouble at their schools.

Gang Membership

For middle and high school students, between 6 and 9 percent of students said that they belonged to gangs. For all grades, reports of gang membership remained very similar to 2002 reports. Across all grades, girls were much less likely to answer that they were members of a gang than boys.

Weapon-Carrying on School Grounds

While high school girls were unlikely to report having carried weapons (6.5 percent), almost one-quarter of high school boys (23.9 percent) responded that they had done so at least once. About 18.9 percent of boys as young as sixth grade reported having carried a weapon, and this percentage rose to a peak of 27.3 percent among 10th-grade boys. Among girls, the highest percentage reporting having carried a weapon was the 9.9 percent of 10th-graders who said they had carried a weapon at least once.

Among students who said they carried a weapon, knives and razors were the weapons most frequently carried. About 14.9 percent of 10th-graders and 12 percent of 12th-graders reported that they had ever carried knives or razors as weapons. Much smaller numbers of students—4.1 percent of 10th-graders, and 4.0 percent of 12th-graders—reported carrying clubs, bats, sticks, or pipes as weapons. Gun-carrying (including handguns, rifles, and shotguns) was reported by 2.5 percent of 10th-graders and 3.4 percent of 12th-graders.

Student Perceptions of School Climate and Relations with Teachers

Between 80 and 88 percent of students reported that they felt safe at their school. Feelings of safety were most common among sixth- and 12th-grade students. There appeared to be no major difference between boys and girls in terms of feeling safe at school.

While the majority of students believed that students of all racial groups got along with each other at their school, there was still a substantial percentage who thought otherwise. Between 39.4 percent and 41.3 percent (depending on grade level) of all students said that students of different races did *not* get along together.

Sixth-grade students (78.8 percent) strongly agreed that administrators and teachers respected their opinions, but among older students, this impression was not as strong. More than one-half, however, said they felt their views were respected. There was no significant gender difference across all grades.

Most (81.4 percent) sixth-grade students said that school rules were fairly and consistently enforced, but this agreement declined among older students, dropping to 67.8 percent among eighth-graders, and continuing to drop throughout high school. Just over one-half (55.5 percent) of high school seniors agreed that rules were enforced fairly.

Another survey item asked students if they felt comfortable “telling teachers or administrators about potential fights, arguments, or weapons at school.” Almost three-fourths (71.5 percent) of sixth-graders answered “yes” to this question, but the majority of the surveyed students in the 10th (57.8 percent) and half of eighth- and 12th-graders (49.9 and 50 percent, respectively) answered “no.” The lowest level of agreement appeared among 10th-grade students, only 42.2 percent of whom said they felt comfortable reporting potential conflicts or weapon information to school staff.

Three items inquired into the relationship between students and teachers. Fully 89 percent of sixth-graders, 74.3 percent of eighth-graders, 70.7 percent of 10th-graders, and 72.3 percent of high school seniors responded that they *did* feel that teachers showed them respect. Girls were more likely than boys to provide this response across all grades except grade 12. The responses to the item “Teachers show they care about students” were nearly identical and the gender difference was the same. About 88.3 percent of sixth-graders, 72.2 percent of eighth-graders, 67.7 percent of 10th-graders, and 71.2 percent of high school seniors responded that teachers showed that they cared about students. The third item asked students whether they felt that students at their school showed respect for teachers. Students thought that they showed respect for teachers less than teachers showed respect for them. About one-half of high school seniors (54 percent) felt that students in general showed respect for teachers in their school.

The final item in this series asked students whether they felt a sense of belonging at their school. Most sixth-graders (83.6%) and about three-quarters of boys and girls alike in all other grades said that they did feel they belonged at their school.

Driving Under the Influence of Intoxicants

Between 19 and 28 percent of all students reported having ridden in a car or truck or on a motorcycle within the past month with a driver who had been using alcohol or drugs. Boys and girls appeared to be about equally likely to report they had recently ridden with a driver who had been using drugs or alcohol.

About 17 percent of Idaho seniors reported having driven while under the influence of drugs or alcohol within 30 days prior to the survey.

Parental Attitudes Toward Problem Behaviors

In general, students indicated that their parents either “disapproved” or “greatly disapproved” of all forms of alcohol and other drug use. In general, students at all grades perceived greater disapproval of occasional marijuana use and smoking than of having five or more drinks once or twice each weekend or one or two drinks nearly every day. Dramatic differences existed in perceived disapproval of attending a party in a private home where alcoholic beverages were available, with about one-half of the high school seniors reporting that their parents would “greatly disapprove” of this.

Student Attitudes Toward Problem Behaviors

Students at all grade levels had greater disapproval of occasional marijuana use and smoking cigarettes than of having five or more drinks once or twice each weekend or one or two drinks nearly every day. About one-quarter (24.9%) of surveyed high school seniors “greatly disapproved” of attending a party in a private home where alcoholic beverages were available.

Students' perceptions of parental disapproval were greater than their own disapproval at all grades for each problem behavior.

Finally, student disapproval rates of each problem behavior were higher in Idaho than disapproval ratings reflected in the national study.

Friends Who Engage in Problem Behaviors

By eighth grade, about two-fifths (40.5%) of surveyed students had at least a few friends who used alcohol, and by 12th grade, nearly four out of five students (76.6%) reported alcohol use by their friends. By 12th grade, about 60.3 percent had at least a few friends who smoked cigarettes, 43.8 percent who used smokeless tobacco, 55.4 percent who smoked marijuana, 13.6 percent who used methamphetamines, and 26 percent who used other illegal drugs.